



# 2023 SPRING WILD TURKEY HUNTING INFORMATION SHEET

Your Spring Wild Turkey Hunting Permit entitles you to participate in the privilege of wild turkey hunting. Please review this information to ensure that you comply with all of the wild turkey hunting regulations. While hunting, please respect the rules of good sportsmanship and the property of others. Have a safe and successful hunt.

## SPRING TURKEY HARVEST REPORTING

**Successful hunters must register their harvest by 10 p.m. on the same calendar day as the turkey was taken by using our automated check-in system as below:**

**BY TELEPHONE (toll-free): 1-866-452-4325 (1-866-IL-CHECK) OR**

**ONLINE: <https://www.exploremoreil.com/wildlife/harvest>**

We hope you are pleased with the ease and convenience of this system.

Please have a pen/pencil on hand (an extra-fine-tipped permanent marker works best). You will be given a 10-character confirmation number which you must write on the leg tag (this serves as proof you have checked in your harvest). When reporting harvest, hunters will be asked to provide a variety of information to assist biologists in managing Illinois' turkey population. Please look over the questions listed on the back of your permit prior to reporting your harvest.

**TAGGING INSTRUCTIONS:** *Immediately upon kill, and before the turkey is moved, transported, or field dressed, the hunter must properly attach the temporary harvest tag to the leg. The tag must remain attached to the leg of the turkey until it is at the legal residence of the person who legally took or possessed the turkey and it has been reported via internet or telephone.*

**PERMIT COMPLETION:** Before hunting, you must sign your permit. You must carry the completed permit, along with your Hunting, Sportsman's, Youth Hunting/Trapping, or Apprentice License and Habitat Stamp (unless exempt), while hunting wild turkey.

## HUNTING REGULATIONS (Shotgun and Archery)

**Bag Limit:** One male turkey (gobbler); or one hen with a visible beard per permit, with a maximum of 3 permits. Once you have your limit, you may not further participate with a weapon in any turkey hunting party.

**Baiting:** Use of live or electronic turkey decoys, recorded calls, dogs or bait (an area is considered as baited during the presence of and for 10 consecutive days following the removal of the bait) is illegal.

**Calling:** It is illegal for any person to use a turkey call that imitates sounds made by a turkey or to attempt to call a turkey by making these sounds while in the field in the Southern Zone from March 15 through the day before the first turkey season and in the Northern Zone from March 22 through the day before the first turkey season. This prohibition only applies in counties open to spring turkey hunting. This prohibition does not apply to participants in the Youth Turkey Hunt with a valid permit, or their accompanying adult, during that season.

**Clothing:** No special clothing is required.

**Hunting Area:** Only that county, counties or special hunt area designated on your permit. Permission to hunt on private property must be obtained from the property owner or tenant. "Property-Only Hunting" permit holders are permitted to hunt on their property ONLY in the counties open for turkey hunting.

Special Hunt area permits are not valid anywhere else in the county. County permits are not valid for the Special Hunt areas.

**Hunting Hours:** One-half hour before sunrise until 1 p.m.

**Roost:** It is illegal to shoot a wild turkey while it is in a tree BEFORE 7 a.m.

**Seasons:** A permit is only valid for the one season identified on the permit. A spring wild turkey "Property-Only Hunting" permit is valid for the entire 32 days encompassed by the five seasons in either the Northern or Southern zones (depending upon where your land is located), but allows the taking of only one wild turkey. A hunting rights lease, or other non-agricultural lease, is not valid for a "Property-Only Hunting" permit.

**Weapons:** The only legal hunting devices to take or attempt to take turkey are:

- 1) A long, recurved or compound bow with a minimum pull of 30 pounds at some point within a 28-inch draw. Minimum arrow length is 20 inches.
- 2) Crossbows shall meet all of the following specifications:
  - a. shall use a bowstring to propel the bolt or arrow and have a minimum peak draw weight of 125 pounds.
  - b. have a minimum length (from butt of stock to front of limbs) of 24 inches.
  - c. have a working safety
  - d. be used with fletched bolts or arrows of not less than 14 inches in length (not including point).

Broadheads must be used. Broadheads may have fixed or expandable cutting surfaces, but they must have a minimum 7/8-inch diameter when fully opened. Broadheads with fixed cutting surfaces must be metal or flint-, chert-, or obsidian-knapped; broadheads with expandable cutting surfaces must be metal.

All other bows and arrows, including electronic arrow tracking devices utilizing radio telemetry, are illegal;

- 3) Shotgun (20 gauge to 10 gauge only, no .410 or .28 gauge allowed); overall minimum length is 26 inches. Minimum barrel length is 18 inches; # 4 shot is the largest shot that may be legally used or possessed while turkey hunting.

### IT IS ILLEGAL:

- For any person to hunt wild turkey without possessing a Wild Turkey Hunting Permit.
- For any person to have in their possession while in the field during wild turkey season, any turkey permit issued to another person.
- To buy, sell or offer to buy or sell wild turkeys or any part thereof including their nest or eggs.

## 2023 SPRING TURKEY HUNTING ZONES AND SEASON DATES

2023 SOUTH ZONE SEASON DATES & COUNTIES		
Season	Beginning Date	Ending Date
1st Season	April 3	April 7
2nd Season	April 8	April 13
3rd Season	April 14	April 19
4th Season	April 20	April 26
5th Season	April 27	May 4

2023 NORTH ZONE SEASON DATES & COUNTIES		
Season	Beginning Date	Ending Date
1st Season	April 10	April 14
2nd Season	April 15	April 20
3rd Season	April 21	April 26
4th Season	April 27	May 3
5th Season	May 4	May 11

### Open South Zone Counties

Alexander, Bond, Clay, Clinton, Crawford, Edwards, Effingham, Fayette, Franklin, Gallatin-Hardin, Hamilton, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson, Lawrence, Madison, Marion, Massac, Monroe, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Randolph, Richland, Saline, St. Clair, Union, Wabash, Washington, Wayne, White, and Williamson

### Open North Zone Counties

Adams, Boone, Brown, Bureau, Calhoun, Carroll, Cass, Champaign, Christian, Clark, Coles, Cumberland, DeKalb, DeWitt, Douglas, Edgar, Ford, Fulton, Greene, Grundy, Hancock, Henderson, Henry, Iroquois, Jersey, JoDaviess, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Knox, Lake, LaSalle, Lee, Livingston, Logan, Macon, Macoupin, Marshall-Putnam, Mason, McDonough, McHenry, McLean, Menard, Mercer, Montgomery, Morgan, Moultrie, Ogle, Peoria, Piatt, Pike, Rock Island, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott, Shelby, Stark, Stephenson, Tazewell, Vermilion, Warren, Whiteside, Will, Winnebago, Woodford

**HUNTING LICENSE:** In addition to your turkey permit, you must have a valid Illinois Hunting, Sportsman's, Youth Hunting/Trapping, or Apprentice License, unless exempt.

**HABITAT STAMP:** Before any person 18 years of age or older takes, attempts to take, or pursues any species of wildlife protected by the Wildlife Code, except migratory waterfowl, coots, and hand-reared birds on licensed game breeding and hunting preserve areas and state-controlled pheasant hunting areas, he or she shall first obtain a State Habitat Stamp. Disabled veterans and former prisoners of war shall not be required to obtain State Habitat Stamps. Any person who obtained a Lifetime License before January 1, 1993, shall not be required to obtain a State Habitat Stamp.

### **FIREARM OWNERS ID CARD (Issued by Illinois State Police): 217-782-7980**

Regardless of who owns the gun, anyone who has a firearm or firearm ammunition in their possession must have in their possession a valid Firearm Owners ID (FOID) Card unless he or she is:

- a) A licensed out-of-state sportsman hunting in Illinois,
- b) Under the age of 21 and under the immediate control of a parent, guardian, or responsible adult who has in their possession a valid FOID Card.

This information is only a guide to the highlights of the rules and regulations governing turkey hunting.

**More complete information is available online at:**  
**[https://](https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/adrules/Pages/default.aspx)**

**[www2.illinois.gov/dnr/adrules/Pages/default.aspx](https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/adrules/Pages/default.aspx)**

For deer and turkey hunting application/permit questions:

217-782-7305 For hunting license and habitat stamp questions: 217-782-2965

For hunter safety education questions: 1-800-832-2599

### **2023 SPRING YOUTH TURKEY HUNT**

March 25 & 26 and April 1 & 2, 2023

The North Zone and South Zone are open concurrently for all four days of the Youth Season.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/hunting/Pages/Youth-Turkey-Information.aspx>